



"Then decorating my hat with a military feather, it was placed upon Nancy's head, and she was greatly elated when the operator showed her her portrait."

HART, Nancy. Few West Virginians were aware that they had a famous spy as a native until *Leslie's Weekly* for May 26, 1910 carried the story of a part she played in the Civil War. The story was by Marion H. Kerner, a Civil War telegrapher, who had reasons to remember Nancy because it was because of her that he spent time in a Confederate prison. This is the story that alerted West Virginians to the fact that there had been a spy in their midst, but it was too late for recognition because by then Nancy had been in her grave on Mannings Knob eight years.

After the battle of Ball's Bluff, in October, 1861, I was

transferred to Gauley Bridge. After a short stay there I was ordered to proceed to Summersville, W. Va. On leaving Gauley Bridge, one of my comrades, Isaiah D. Maize (now living in Philadelphia), remarked to me, "You will come back by way of the South." He was a true prophet, as will now be explained.

After a tedious and perilous ride over rugged and uncertain paths, we emerged from the density of the mountain forest into the more cheerful and inspiring sunlight which greeted us as we turned our horses' heads toward Summersville, on the broad Clarksburg turnpike. I reported to Lieutenant-Colonel

William C. Starr, who commanded the detachment of about sixty effective men of the Ninth West Virginia Regiment stationed at this post, the main body of which I had left at Gauley Bridge. Colonel Starr's headquarters was in a pretty, two-story and attic frame dwelling, which had been hastily abandoned by its occupants upon the approach of the "Yankee troops." All the comforts of a happy country home were in evidence here. The parlor furniture was plain, but comfortable; the walls were adorned with engravings and colored prints or chromos indicative of the artistic taste of the family; the dining-room, kitchen and bedrooms were well equipped. The large front room on the second floor, which formerly had contained a double bed, was now furnished with four single cots, which were used by Colonel Starr, Captain Davis, Lieutenant Stivers and myself. The double bed had been relegated to one of the two attic rooms, for whatever emergency might arise. It was unexpected when it did arise.

The little garden back of the house had been stripped of all vegetation, so it became necessary for us to resort to a little foraging for whatever fresh vegetables our appetites might crave. One warm July day, in 1862, a foraging party, made up of Colonel Starr, Captain Davis, two orderlies and myself, started out in search of such table luxuries as our garden had ceased to supply. We had been out about three hours when smoke was discovered ascending from the valley below, indicating a habitation. In the direction of the smoke we guided our horses, and soon came to a log cabin, in front of which were two mountain maidens busily engaged in crushing corn between two big

bowlders which had been fashioned for that purpose. When they saw us approaching, they ran into the cabin and barred the heavy wooden door after them. Nearing the cabin, we saw the face of an old woman peering through the little hinged window on one side of the door, and heard her exclaim to the girls, "The Yankees are upon us!" Lieutenant-Colonel Starr dismounted from his horse and gently knocked upon the door, but receiving no response, he knocked more vigorously. After several vain attempts he went to the window, and assuring the old lady that our mission was a friendly one, she was persuaded to exchange some of her garden truck for the liberal supply of salt we offered. This important commodity was scarce and very expensive in this region, as well as all over the South.

When our sacks were filled, we were about to remount our horses and return to Summersville, when Lieutenant-Colonel Starr drew from his pocket a description of a young girl, named Nancy Hart, a rebel guide, for whose capture the government had offered a liberal reward. He handed the paper to Captain Davis, and after a brief consultation the two returned to the cabin and, dismounting, approached the young girls, who had resumed their corn crushing. Lieutenant-Colonel Starr laid his hand gently upon the shoulders of one of the girls and said, "Well, Nancy, at last we've got you!" "My God!" she exclaimed, "I am not Nancy Hart! What are you going to do with me?" With this unconscious confession from the girl's own lips, there was no further hesitation. She and her companion were taken to Summersville and incarcerated in a dilapidated old building which had formerly served as the jail. Escape would have been easy for

these nymphs of the mountains but for the vigilance of the guards, who constantly patrolled the building on every side.

The personal comfort of prisoners of war was not a subject for serious consideration in those turbulent times, a place in which to secure them being more important. But here were two young women, untutored and uncultured, it is true, but still they were women, and their condition in this miserable old building excited my sympathy. I thought of the vacant attic in our headquarters, and appealed to Colonel Starr to transfer his prisoners to this more comfortable abode. After much persuasion the colonel consented, and the transfer was duly made. To while away the dreary hours of their imprisonment, I supplied them with sewing material and illustrated papers, which they could not read, but they eagerly studied the pictures. They were also furnished with such dainties as the sutler's wagon afforded, and I did what I could to allay their fears.

One day an itinerant ambrotypist came along, and by permission of the colonel I escorted Nancy out to the wagon under guard to have her picture taken. She had never seen a camera before, and became very much excited when asked to sit before the instrument, which the operator had focused upon a vacant camp stool. She was assured of its harmlessness only after my picture was taken. Then decorating my hat with a military feather, it was placed upon Nancy's head, and she was greatly elated when the operator showed her the portrait. The picture was framed in a little case bearing the American eagle and United States flag as adornments on the back. One of these copies is still in my



MARION H. KERNER

The United States military telegraph operator who was befriended by Nancy Hart until he double-crossed her.

possession and is reproduced (herewith).

During the day the door of the room occupied by the girls was kept open, so that the guard patrolling in front might keep an eye on his charges. No restriction was placed upon conversation with the girls, but the guards were not allowed to enter the room. Nevertheless, Nancy managed to win the confidence of one of them so far as to secure his musket, probably in order to convince him that she could shoulder it as well as she had ever shouldered her rifle, with which, she said, her skill had enabled her to furnish the home with all sorts of game, large and small, that abounded in the mountains. No sooner had she grasped the musket in her hands, however, than she stepped back in the room, and lifting it to her shoulder, fired. Her guard fell dead at his post, and Nancy, jumping over his body, rushed downstairs and out to the barn,



NANCY HART ESCAPING. A drawing by Millie Anderson for a C & P Telephone Company series of historical sketches used as mailing pieces.

where she mounted Colonel Starr's horse, and, without saddle or bridle, fled away before the sleeping officials could possibly realize what had happened. This was about four o'clock in the morning. The next thing we heard was the alarm from the outposts, but Nancy had escaped, leaving her unfortunate companion behind, who related to us the circumstances of the shooting of the guard just as she had witnessed it with her own astonished eyes.

Men were immediately sent in pursuit, the little cabin at the foot of the mountain was closely watched, the mountains were scoured in every direction, but no sign of Nancy, until one morning, a week later, she appeared at the head of a battalion of Jackson's cavalry, five hundred strong, under command of Major Bailey, who surrounded our headquarters

and without much resistance captured the entire force, including one Dr. Rucker, for whom the Confederates had long been looking and whom they were anxious to capture on account of his Union proclivities. Even the men at the outposts were dragged into the net and lined up in front of headquarters for the march to Dixie. Nancy had not forgotten the little favors which had shortened the hours of her captivity, so when she saw me in the line of prisoners she hastened to Major Bailey and told him that I was not a Yankee, but that I, too, was a prisoner, and he ought to let me go. With this assurance from the girl, he allowed me to enter the house to get my effects.

My first thought upon entering the office was to secure the main line sounder, an important telegraph instrument, which was still in place. This I did, and

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placing it under an army blanket which I threw over my arm, made my way down the turnpike in the direction of Gauley Bridge. I had proceeded about a mile when I came to the place where the wire had been cut by the enemy to prevent communication with the main body of the regiment. Placing my instrument in circuit and grounding the Summersville side, I found the wire "O. K." to Gauley Bridge.

While in the act of reporting the capture, I was surprised by half a dozen mounted men, who approached with carbines leveled at me and ordered me to desist. I promptly obeyed the order, and likewise accepted without hesitation their pressing invitation to join them in a little excursion back to Summersville. When the case was reported to Major Bailey, he flew into a rage and with an oath threatened to "shoot the little Yankee traitor." But Nancy again came to my rescue. What she told the major I never knew, but he put me under guard, and, as my comrade at Gauley Bridge had predicted, my face was turned toward the South.

We marched over those rough mountain paths all day and until long after sundown before we reached a spot where it was safe to rest for the night. This was in an open piece of ground on the mountainside far away from the turnpike, which our escort avoided for fear of being overtaken by our troops. Several of our soldiers were without substantial footgear, and they suffered with sore feet until we were finally unfit to march. Then we were mounted on horses and the former riders walked until we reached the pike again. The horse I rode was without saddle and there were no stirrups. I suffered worse torment than when walking, for the blood rushed to

my hanging feet and they felt as if they were being held down by heavy weights. Fortunately, however, a country wagon was impressed into service, and the invalids were tumbled into it and we rode the remainder of the way to White Sulphur Springs.

General Loring was in command here, and after securing Dr. Rucker in irons and feeding the prisoners they marched us to Christianburg, where we were hustled into a cattle train and sent to Lynchburg fair grounds. Here I met Frank Lamb, Frank Drummond, Charlie Moore and Henry Buell, members of the United States Military Telegraph Corps, who had been captured previously. From Lynchburg we were sent, on August 11th, to Belle Isle and thence to Libby Prison, where we remained until paroled on September 14th, 1862. Frank Drummond's prison diary of August 31st, 1862, records that the street guards had orders to shoot any prisoner whose head appeared flush with the window. One of the operators forgot himself one day and leaned out to view the James River. He drew back as he saw the guard raise his gun. When the shot was fired, we heard a commotion above us and later learned that the ball had passed through our ceiling and killed a sergeant who was sitting on a table in the room above, four or five feet from the window.

One day an official of the prison came into our room and called out Frank Lamb, Frank Drummond, Henry Buell, Marion Kerner. He escorted us to the office, where we were confronted by General Winder. The official who had taken us into the office avoided my inquiry as to why we were called, but intimated something about hostages for a Confederate telegrapher who had

been convicted of being a spy, and that we might be subjected to whatever punishment the "Yankee government" imposed upon him, and meantime would be held as hostages pending negotiations. At last a broad official form was produced, containing our descriptions and an obligation for our signature under oath. "This," said Winder, "is a parole; sign it and prepare to return to your homes." After each had signed his name, it suddenly flashed upon us that Charlie Moore was not there. We could not leave our comrade behind. A search of the record disclosed the fact that his name had been inadvertently omitted. After some delay the official departed to bring Moore.

Returning to our ward we packed up our belongings and took passage on a wagon to the James River, where the United States steamer *New York* was waiting to take aboard the exchanged and paroled prisoners. We made no landings until we reached Annapolis, where we were put ashore and left to shift for ourselves. Our first thought was of the telegraph office and a message to the War Department announcing our arrival and destitute condition. Arrangements for our transportation reached us with orders to report at the War Department. We were a sorry looking lot of tramps. Not one of the party cared to present himself until divested of his veteran costume which had been worn during imprisonment. There was no way to overcome our modesty but to raise money by hook or crook.

After a long discussion as to ways and means, one of the prodigals volunteered to go to General Anson Stager, general superintendent of military telegraphs. Putting on his happiest expression, he boldly entered

General Stager's office and cautioned him to stand aloof while he told the story which brought forth enough cash for our immediate necessities. "Come in to-morrow when you get cleaned up," said the general. The "volunteer's return" brought joy to the hearts of the other four despondent knights of the key.

We purchased new outfits at the store of Saks & Co., on Seventh Street. We made quite a respectable appearance the following day when we entered the office of General Stager, and the greeting we received was most fraternal and hearty. The stories of our capture and imprisonment were told by each one in detail, and we were provided with railroad passes to our respective homes, where anxious hearts were awaiting our return.

Nancy Hart, the prime cause of my prison experience, was never seen again by me, and she has probably passed away long ago.

Note: Miss Gladys Vaughan of Kesslers Cross Lanes supplied the Leslie's clipping for this work. To set history right, she added some facts about Nancy Hart's life. After the war she married Joshua Douglass and bore him two sons, George and Kennos. Nancy's last public appearance was shortly before her death, and at the court house in Lewisburg to testify in behalf of Kennos who was charged with the killing of Tom Reed at a dance in Trout Valley. Dr. William P. Rucker, a brilliant lawyer and physician who lived near Kesslers Cross Lanes in the bend of the Gauley River, known for years as the Rucker Bend, defended Kennos.

Nancy Hart is buried on Mannings Knob in Greenbrier County. Her grave is in the cemetery where the Mannings family buried their slaves. At the

foot of the hill stood the Mannings plantation home. Nothing is known today of the Mannings family. Buried there, too, is Ivan Hunter of Richwood. He manned the fire tower which was on the knob and became so infatuated with the memory of the spy and so engrossed in her life, that he asked to be buried by her side.

HARTMAN, Mrs. I. F., active in political and civic work in Upshur County, was born in Salisbury, Maryland. She graduated from the University of Maryland School of Nursing in 1965 and in 1970 moved to Buckhannon with her husband, a surgeon in that city. She was active in the 1972 gubernatorial campaign of Jay Rockefeller, was an officer in Upshur Flying Service and was associated with the Upshur County Health Planning Council and the Women's Counselling Service at West Virginia Wesleyan College. She sought election as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1974.



MRS. I. F. HARTMAN

HATFIELD WOMEN. Over the years, much has been written about the male members of the Hatfield clan who took part in that early orgy of blood-letting — the Hatfield-McCoy feud. But nothing has been said concerning the indomitable wives of that stalwart breed of men.

My purpose is to pay a richly deserved tribute to one of those pioneer women — the late Nancy Elizabeth, wife of William Anderson Hatfield, commonly known as "Cap," second son of Devil Anse, and the most deadly killer of the feud.

More than 30 years have passed since I last talked with her; but I still regard Nancy Elizabeth Hatfield as the most remarkable and unforgettable woman of the mountains.

In the spring of 1924, I was a candidate in the primary election for the Republican nomination for attorney general, and I wanted the Hatfield influence. Devil Anse had died in 1921, and his mantle of leadership of the clan had fallen to his oldest living son, Cap — a power in Logan County politics.

I had met Cap, casually, in 1912, but I had not seen him since that meeting. But his sister, Mrs. Betty Caldwell, and her husband, lived in my county of Mercer, and were among my political supporters. To pave the way for my later meeting with Cap, I had Mrs. Caldwell write and ask him to support me.

Later, when campaigning in the City of Logan, I engaged a taxi to take me the few miles up Island Creek to Cap's home. The car stopped suddenly and the driver pointed to a comfortable-looking farm house on the other side of the creek and said:

"That's Cap's home, and that's Cap out there by the barn."

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NANCY ELIZABETH (MRS. CAP) HATFIELD (1932).

I told him to return for me in two hours.

Cap saw me get out of the car, and, as I crossed the creek on an old-fashioned footlog, I saw him fold his arms across his chest and slip his right hand under his coat. Later, I noticed a large pistol holstered under his left arm. Even in that late day, Cap took no chances with strangers. When I got within speaking distance, I told him my name, and that I had come to solicit his support in my campaign for attorney general. He gave me a hearty handclasp, and said:

"My sister, Mrs. Caldwell, wrote us about you. But, let's go to the house, my wife is the politician in our family."

Cap was reluctant to commit himself "so early." But Nancy Elizabeth thought otherwise. Finally, Cap agreed to support me; and, with that point settled, we visited until my taxi returned. Meanwhile, with Cap's

approval, Nancy Elizabeth gave me the accompanying, heretofore unpublished photograph of the Devil Anse Clan. In 1963 I rephotographed it and sent a print to Willis Hatfield (number 22 in picture), only survivor of Devil Anse, who made the identifications. Nancy Elizabeth is number 16, and the baby in her lap is her son, Robert Elliott, born April 29, 1897. Therefore, the photograph must have been made late in 1897, or early in 1898.

A few months after Cap's death (August 22, 1930), the West Virginia newspaper publishers and editors held their annual convention in Logan. I was invited to address the group at a morning session. That same day, Sheriff Joe Hatfield and his brother, Tennis, younger brothers of Cap, gave an ox-roast dinner for the visiting newsmen and their guests. The picnic was held on a narrow strip of bottom land, on Island Creek, a half-mile below the old home of Devil Anse.

I ate lunch with Nancy Elizabeth and her sister-in-law, Betty Caldwell. After lunch, at the suggestion of Mrs. Caldwell, we three drove up the creek to the old home of her father — Devil Anse. It was a large, two-story, frame structure (since destroyed by fire, then occupied by Tennis Hatfield, youngest son of Devil Anse).

The most interesting feature in the old home was Devil Anse's gun-room. Hanging along its walls were a dozen, or more, high-powered rifles, and a number of large caliber pistols, ranging from the earliest to the latest models. "The older guns," said Nancy Elizabeth, "were used in the feud."

As we returned, we stopped at the family cemetery that clings uncertainly to the steep mountainside, overlooking the picnic grounds. There, among the

mountains he loved and ruled, old Devil Anse found peace. A life-size statue of the old man, carved in Italy (from a photograph) of the finest Carrara marble, stands in majestic solitude above his grave. On its four-foot high granite base are carved the names of his wife and their thirteen children.

Our next stop was at the home of Nancy Elizabeth, the same home where I visited with her and Cap during my campaign. For nearly three hours I asked questions and listened to that remarkable woman recount many of her experiences as the wife of America's most celebrated feudist.

Nancy Elizabeth's home also held a number of guns, pistols, and other relics of the feud days. But the most interesting item was Cap's bullet-proof, steel breastplate, designed to cover the entire front half of his body from his neck to his lower abdomen.

"Mrs. Hatfield," I said, "judging from the three bullet marks on it, this breastplate was a great protection to Cap; but what was to prevent an enemy from shooting him in the back?" Her eyes flashed as she replied: "Mr. Lee, Cap Hatfield never turned his back on an enemy or a friend."

"I have read two stories, Mrs. Hatfield, each purporting to give the true cause of the feud:

One book stated that it was the result of a dispute between a McCoy and a Hatfield over the ownership of a hog;

Another book said that it grew out of the seduction of a McCoy girl by Johnson Hatfield, oldest son of Devil Anse. Is either one of these stories true?"

No. Neither story is true," she replied. "The McCoys lived on the Kentucky side of Tug River, and the Hatfields lived on the West Virginia side. Hogs don't swim rivers. I never heard the girl story until I read it in a book, written

long after the feud was over. Both stories are pure fiction.

"The truth is," she continued, "in the fall of 1882, in an election-day fight between Ellison Hatfield, a younger brother of Devil Anse, and three McCoy brothers, Ellison was shot and knifed. He died two days later. In retaliation, Devil Anse and his clan captured and shot the three McCoy brothers. It was these four senseless killings that started the feud."

In answer to my inquiry, Nancy Elizabeth said:

"Yes, there had been 'bad blood' between the two families since the Civil War. In that struggle the Hatfields were 'Rebels', - loyal to their State, Virginia. Devil Anse organized and was the captain of a company of Confederate sympathizers called the 'Logan Wildcats'. They were recruited for local defense; but they left the county long enough to take part in the battle of Scary, fought along the banks of the Kanawha River, a few miles below Charleston.

"The McCoys, and their mountain neighbors, were pro-Union; and to protect their region against invasion by 'Virginia Rebels', they organized a military company called 'Home Guards'. There were occasional border clashes between the two forces, with casualties on both sides. The war ended only seventeen years before the feud began, and the bitterness still existed in the minds of the older generation, and they passed it on to their children. It was the old sectional and political hatreds that sparked the fight between Ellison Hatfield and the McCoy brothers."

Nancy Elizabeth declined to estimate the number killed on either side in the feud.

"It was a horrible nightmare to

me," she said. "Sometimes, for months, Cap never spent a night in our house. He and Devil Anse, with others, slept in the nearby woods to guard our homes against surprise attacks. At times, too, we women and our children slept in hidden shelters in the forests.

"But these assaults were not one-sided affairs. The Hatfields crossed the Tug and killed McCoys. It was a savage war of extermination, regardless of age or sex. Finally, to get our children to a safer locality, we Hatfields left Tug River, crossed the mountains, and settled here on Island Creek, a tributary of the Guyandot River.

"No, there was no formal truce ending hostilities. After a decade, or more, of fighting and killing, both sides grew tired and quit. The McCoys stayed in Kentucky and the Hatfields kept to West Virginia. The feud was really over a long time before either side realized it.

"Yes, Kentucky offered a large reward for the capture of Devil Anse and Cap. The governor of West Virginia refused to extradite them because, said he, 'their trials in Kentucky would be nothing more than legalized lynchings'. It was then that Kentucky's governor offered the reward for their capture - 'dead or alive'. Three attempts were made by reward seekers to capture them.

"Dan Cunningham, a Charleston detective, with two Cincinnati detectives, made the first attempt. They came through Kentucky, and crossed Tug River in the night; but the Hatfields soon captured them. A justice of the peace sentenced them to 90 days in Logan County jail for 'disturbin' the peace'. When released, they were told to follow the Guyandot River to Huntington, a distance of 60 miles, and 'not to come back'.

"Next, a man named Phillips

led two raids from Kentucky into Hatfield territory. In the first, he captured 'Cottontop' Mounts, a relative and supporter of the Hatfields, and took him to Pikeville, Kentucky, where he was hanged. But the second foray met with disaster at the 'Battle of the Grapevine'. Phillips, and some of his followers, escaped into Kentucky, but some were buried where they fell.

"This was the last attempt of the reward seekers. However, Kentucky never withdrew the reward offer, and that is why Devil Anse and Cap were always armed and on the alert."

"Mrs. Hatfield, your husband and his father bore the same given names, - 'William Anderson'. How did they get the nicknames of 'Cap' and 'Devil Anse'?"

"It is very simple," she replied, "Early in life Devil Anse's name was shortened to 'Anse'. During, and after, the Civil War he was called 'Captain Anse'. The son, because he had the same name as his father, was called 'Little Cap'. As the boy grew larger, the word 'Little' was dropped. Also, because of their fierceness in feud combats, the McCoys called the father 'Devil Anse' and the son 'Bad Cap'. The newspapers took up the names, and they stuck. Devil Anse liked and cultivated his title; but, eventually, the word 'Bad' was dropped from Cap's nickname.

"Was I afraid? For years, day and night, I lived in fear. Afraid for my own safety, and for the safety of my loved ones. Constant fear is a terrible emotion. It takes a heavy toll, mentally and physically.

"I now think that my most anxious moments, as well as my greatest thrill, came years after the feud was over. In 1922, Tennis Hatfield and another deputy sheriff went over to Pikeville, Kentucky, to return a

prisoner. County. visited the surviving after the man was Anse's yo spent the told Ten home wi Cap, he glad I am am sorry would li Tennis w know how old enemy in Logan place to co

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prisoner, wanted in Logan County. While there, Tennis visited the aged Randolph McCoy, surviving leader of his clan during the feud. (Tennis was born long after the feud was over). The old man was delighted to see 'Devil Anse's youngest son', and Tennis spent the night with him.

"The next morning, Randolph told Tennis that he was going home with him. 'I want to see Cap,' he said, 'and tell him how glad I am that I didn't kill him. I am sorry Devil Anse is gone, I would like to see him, too.' Tennis was worried. He didn't know how Cap would receive his old enemy. So, he left Randolph in Logan while he came up to our place to consult Cap.

"Cap listened to Tennis's story, and said:

'Does he come in peace?'

'Yes,' said Tennis, 'he comes in peace.'

'Does he come unarmed?'

'Yes, he comes unarmed.'

'Then, I shall be happy to greet him in the same way. Bring him up for supper, and he shall spend the night with us.'

"My anxious moments were just before these two strong-willed men met. I knew how they had hated each other; that each had tried to kill the other, more than once, that each had killed relatives and friends of the other; and I was afraid of what they might do when they stood face to face.

"My thrill came when I saw them clasp hands, and heard each one tell the other how happy he was to see him. They talked far into the night, and both were up early the next morning, eager to continue their talks. Tennis came about one o'clock to drive Randolph back to his Kentucky home. Cap watched them until they passed out of sight up the creek, and then remarked: 'You

know, I always did like that cantankerous old cuss.'

"Cap and Randolph never saw each other again."

"Mrs. Hatfield, we have talked much about an era that is gone, — feuds are ended, railroads and paved highways have come, the huge coal industry has developed, churches and schools are everywhere, and people are educated. Now, I would like to know something about you."

This is the brief life-story of the remarkable and unforgettable Nancy Elizabeth Hatfield, as she related it to me.

She was Nancy Elizabeth Smith, called "Nan" by her family and friends; born in Wayne County, West Virginia, September 10, 1866. (She died August 24, 1942). In her early years, she lived "close enough to the Ohio River," she said, "to see the big boats that brought people and goods up from below." She attended a country school three months out of the year, and acquired the rudiments of a common school education, plus a yearning for wider knowledge.

While she was still a young girl her parents moved by push-boat up the Big Sandy and Tug rivers into what is now Mingo County, then Logan County. They settled in the wilderness on Mate Creek, near the site of the present town of Matewan.

"Why they made that move," said Nancy Elizabeth, "I have never understood."

In her new environment, in the summer of 1880, when she was 14 years old, Nancy Elizabeth married Joseph M. Glenn, an enterprising young adventurer from Georgia, who had established a store in the mountains, and floated rafts of black walnut logs, and other timber, down the Tug and Big Sandy rivers to the lumber mills of Catlettsburg, Ky., and

Portsmouth, Ohio.

Two years after their marriage Glenn was waylaid and murdered by a former business associate, named Bill Smith — no relation to Nancy Elizabeth. Smith escaped into the wilderness and was never apprehended. The 16-year old widow was left with a three-weeks old infant son, who grew to manhood, and for years, that son, the late Joseph M. Glenn, was a leading lawyer in the city of Logan.

On October 11, 1883, a year after her husband's death, at the age of 17, Nancy Elizabeth married the 19-year old Cap Hatfield, second son of Devil Anse.

"He was the best looking young man in the settlement," she proudly told me.

But at that time Cap had little to recommend him, except his good looks. He was born Feb. 6, 1864, during the Civil War, and grew up in a wild and lawless wilderness, where people were torn and divided by political and sectional hatreds and family feuds — a rugged, mountain land, without roads, schools, or churches.

When he married, Cap could neither read nor write, but he possessed the qualities necessary for survival in that turbulent time and place — he was "quick on the draw, and a dead shot."

"When we were married, Cap was not a very good risk as a husband," said Nancy Elizabeth. "The feud had been going on for a year, and he was already its most deadly killer. Kentucky had set a price on his head. But we were young, he was handsome, and I was deeply in love with him. Besides, he was the best shot on the border, and I was confident that he could take care of himself — and he did."

Nancy Elizabeth taught her handsome husband to read and

write, and imparted to him the meager learning she had acquired in the country school in Wayne County. But, more important, she instilled into him her own hunger for knowledge.

Cap had a brilliant mind, and he set about to improve it. He and Nancy Elizabeth bought and read many books on history and biography, and they also subscribed for and read a number of the leading magazines of their day. In time they built up a small library of good books, which they read and studied along with their children.

At the urging of Nancy Elizabeth, Cap decided to study law, and enrolled at the University Law School at Huntingdon, Tennessee. But six months later, a renewal of the feud brought him back to the mountains. He never returned to law school, but continued his legal studies at home, and was admitted to the bar in Wyoming and Mingo counties. However, he never practiced the profession.

Nancy Elizabeth and Cap raised seven of their nine children, and Nancy's eyes grew moist as she talked of the sacrifices she and Cap had made that their children might obtain the education fate had denied to their parents. But her face glowed with a mother's pride as she said:

"All our children are reasonably well educated. Three are college graduates, and the others attended college from one to three years. But, above everything else, they are all good and useful citizens."

As I left the home of the remarkable and unforgettable Nancy Hatfield, I knew that I had been in the presence of a queenly woman — a real "Mountain Queen." — Howard B. Lee, former Attorney General of West Virginia.

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